

SONNETS

AND

LOVE

POEMS



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ANNA

COMTESSE

DE BRÉMONT

IN MEMORIAM
Paul Steindorff
1864-1934



Choragus
Univ. Of California

No. 240

To Paul Steinbock, Esq.
with the compliments of
Anna de Bremond

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SONNETS AND LOVE POEMS

BY

ANNA, COMTESSE DE BRÉMONT

“ For she is a daughter of Odin’s line,
With the Norseman’s blood in her veins ;
And her soul it is bound to the souls of the Gods
That reign o’er the boreal plains ! ”

NEW YORK

1892

TO MY HUSBAND,
LE COMTE LÉON DE BRÉMONT,
Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur,
THE MEMORY OF WHOSE TENDER LOVE AND
PASSIONATE DEVOTION
INSPIRED THESE POEMS—
THE SOLACE OF MANY SAD HOURS—
I LOVINGLY DEDICATE
THIS LITTLE BOOK.

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SONNETS.

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SONNETS.

A SEQUENCE.

I.

IN THE LAND OF GOLD.

Oh ! land of gold, thou art a land of love,
Where sleeps man's soul steeped in love's slum-
berous wine.

E'en sin here wears a countenance benign,
As when Olympian gods held reign above.
The luscious fever lust in thy dark sons
Miasma-like creeps thro' the chilliest blood,
Until its subtle stream becomes a flood
O'ersweeping sense and reason as it runs.

And I, from lands across the cool, deep seas,
Like some fair bird that flying singed its wing
Athwart a crater's fiery, scorching breeze,
Or lily drooping 'neath the poisoned sting
Of honeyless tho' gold-bedizened bees,
In Passion's summer—lost Love's holy spring !

II.

NIGHT ON THE REEF.

The sun has sunk, no tender gloaming cometh
To soothe earth's burning breast ; up from the east
Creeps the chill breeze of night now day hath
ceased.

List ! thro' the trees, like mystic music, hummeth
The low sound of the night wind's sobbing tide.
Hark ! the wild bird his mellow plaint doth tune ;
Like pale proud beauty the voluptuous moon
Her cloudy couch doth press with silver side.

And now the night doth grow more wondrous
fair,

A thousand shadows their weird arms up-toss,
And beat with noiseless pulse the dewy air
Above the veldt flowers sleeping 'mid the moss.
Afar the planets stream with fiery hair
Around the glory of the Southern Cross.

III.

O'ER THE VELDT.

How calm, how soft, that beauteous Afric night
When we together o'er the mossy veldt
Our horses spurred ; we heard the silence melt
Beneath their flying hoofs in onward flight.
Ah ! ne'er a word we spoke, my Love and I.
Our hearts beat quick with sweet foreshadowings,
Our souls thrilled as a harp that answering sings
When swept by some fair unseen spirit's sigh.

What tho' the road o'er vale and over mine
And kopje lay, and night grew deeper still,
When far ahead we saw the home-light shine,
That sweet nest light—the ranch upon the
 hill ?
Our horses leapt to see its out-span sign,
Home swift they sped, as water to the mill !

IV.

IN THE RANCH.

The smiling moon a silent welcome cast
Athwart the earthen floor, the bare brown walls
Seemed fairer than a prince's frescoed halls ;
A moth whirled, glittering in the lamplight, past,
Its golden life the nonce still brighter grown ;
Fluttering translucent there within the glow,
Hov'ring an instant o'er its gleaming foe,
Then lost forever 'mid the flame's red zone.

Was there no omen in the insect's doom ?
Silent we stood within the threshold dim ;
We heard afar the distant battery boom ;
Our lips mixed, my shy eyes spake unto him.
A sudden glory gilded all the room—
Our cup of love foamed to the very brim !

V.

LOVE'S CONSUMMATION.

Oh ! night brimful of bliss, when ne'er a thought
Of past, of future, entered—when alone
The present wove a garland, fragrant blown
As roses, of the luscious hours love-wrought ;
When our two souls transfused by passion's fire
Together grew, till they became as one.
E'en as eclipse doth blend the moon and sun,
So merged we in the heaven of desire.

Then lo ! a wondrous spell seemed round us
 spun.

In that mysterious moment face to face
We stood with Love, and his sweet secret won :
Our throbbing hearts met in a soft embrace ;
We felt our very life-sands quicker run
In tumult wild to love's voluptuous pace.

VI.

LOVE'S KNOWLEDGE.

Oh ! joy to be in love's supernal mould
Forever cast, aye, e'en to feel and know
Another's soul with ours doth daily grow,
And round our life its spirit-tendrils fold ;
To know an answering thought speaks to our
 thought,
As needle to the magnet bright doth turn ;
To feel another's heart-beat throb and yearn
Against our heart in sweetest throes love-wrought !

To quaff the waters clear of sympathy
Together, from her magic flagon deep,
Till life seems one long dream of rhapsody,
Where joy and peace, like stars, their vigil keep
Athwart the tide of love's great ecstasy,
Whose waves shall e'en death's barrier over-
 sweep !

VII.

IN ABSENCE.

There is no silence in this wild, wild night ;
The wind doth rage like lion overwrought.
I sit alone and muse in quiet thought,
Dream-weaving in the candle's mellow light.
But I am not alone ; near me doth sit
Thine other self—it is thy soul I see ;
And oh! how sweet the words it speaks to me,
How warm the glow within its eyes, love-lit !

And this it tells me—it has come to cheer
My lonely hours of work and study deep,
To soothe me for the absent kiss so dear,
And watch while I my toilsome vigil keep.
Thus, love, unto each other we are near
By day, by night, e'en waking and asleep !

VIII.

EXPECTANCY.

How sweet the summer night pales 'neath the
moon,
Like the rise and fall of its trembling mists,
My soul is swayed as it longingly lists
For thy dear step that ne'er cometh too soon.
The moments seemingly tread like the hours,
I hear the echoes of strange passing feet
Keeping time to my heart's impatient beat.
As I think of the night that shall be ours.

At last thou art come ! and in sweet surprise
Thine arms doth enfold and thrill me with
bliss ;
E'en my pulse doth leap to the sound of thy
sighs,
My soul is drunk with thy lingering kiss,
Till I faint 'neath the rapture in thine eyes.
Was ever Expectancy crowned like this ?

IX.

JEALOUSY.

There is a blight that creeps like dankling mist
Adown the slopes of some fair mountain side,
And in its clammy folds doth deeply hide
The smiling vale the sun so warmly kist.
There is a subtle secret canker blight ;
Up-grows a worm within the rosy fruit ;
A blight whose deadly tendrils oft take root
Within the sweetest flower's beauty bright.

Likewise a chilling shadow slowly crept
Between our hearts, a mist of doubt, foul-born
Of Envy's breath ; Love drooped his head and
wept
Slow, bitter tears, to feel the blight of scorn,
Forgot all speech—his very kisses slept
Unchallenged on his pining lips forlorn !

.

X.

A PLEA.

Is there no charm in a remembered kiss
To woo thee to forget a hasty word ?
Is there no memory of the love that stirred
Thine inmost being with deep passion's bliss ?
Is there no thought, e'en of those happy nights,
When 'neath the cradle of the moon we found—
Whilst music spread her mantie of sweet sound—
A joy supreme surpassing all delights ?

My heart Grief's burning finger deeply sears ;
Pale the rose-chain wherewith thou decked my
 hair ;
Behold ! e'en as its petals 'neath my tears
Died lingeringly, regret doth me ensnare.
My soul is sinking 'neath a pall of fears ;
Whilst I for thee doth hunger in despair !

XI.

RECONCILIATION.

How sweet the meeting of estrangèd hearts,
When dear Forgiveness spreads her sacred balm
Of grateful tears, and smiles a sunny calm
Athwart Love's sky a rainbowed light imparts.
Then Love renewed from holier birth doth spring
Chastened, refined within affliction's fire.
To golden realms of happiness still higher
He plumes his joyous flight on strengthened wing.

More sweet the joy of fond possession seems,
More dear the treasure of the refund prize,
More warm the kiss, more bright the smile
that beams
With deepened light in my beloved's eyes.
But oh ! more rapturous far, to wake from
dreams,
And feel Love's throbbing heart that on mine
lies !

XII.

FINIS.

Oh ! Love, 'tis best that love's brief span should
end,
Lost in the gloom and shrouded light of death,
Where steal no tears — not e'en the trembling
breath
Of sigh or moan can that long silence rend.
Dear Love ! the grave doth hold thee fast and deep,
Its cold embrace now mars thee with decay.
Poor eyes, poor lips, ye no surprise betray—
So merciful, so quiet thy last sleep.

Yea, Love ! 'Tis best love's life has ended so,
In sweet fruition's mellowed bloom and flower,
Tho' numbered here, love's days have caught
the glow
That shines athwart the Eternal's glorious
bower.
There, soul to soul, remembered joys we'll
know,
And love immortal be our blissful dower.

MORN ON THE CAPE.

I. DAWN.

Slow waned the night—the faithful white-leaved
friend,

That wooed my watch with sweet poetic lore,
Fell from my heedless hand upon the floor,
As Sleep, soft Sleep, her wings did o'er me bend.
Soon stole the pale clear hour 'twixt day and night.
The candle by my couch waxed dim and wan,
When crept a pink-tipped finger of the dawn
My pillow near, and woke my sleeping sight.

Then swift the shuttered casement wide I flung,
Gazed out across the dreaming sea below,
Whose white-capped surf a low-voiced matin
 sung ;
Far Afric's peaks dark loomed against the
 glow
Of gold that on the sky's gray edges hung,
Like some celestial river's overflow.

II. FORE-GLOW.

And now more amber-hued, more luminous grows
The tide of light athwart the horizon's brim,
Uplighting peak and sombre mountain dim ;
Gray melts to pearl, and pearl to faintest rose ;
An opal-tinted splendor bathes the sky.
The clouds seem in a rainbowed haze to swim
Adown the blushing west, whose purpled rim
Pales violet, as night's dark vapors die.

An iris-tinted sheen creeps o'er the sea,
And o'er the sleeping town, all wan and white
Gleam cottage, spire, and roof : while every tree
And shrub beneath the tabled-mountain's height
Drinks in the glow : with silent quiv'ring glee
Breathless awaits the world the god of light !

III. SUNRISE.

Lo ! o'er yon mountain's blue and jagged crest
Behold ! the glow, like gate of Paradise.
A thousand rays their flaming swords uprise
All ruddy, gold and silvered amethyst.
Far out across the sea each phantom light
Fades on the swinging mast, while bark and ship
Start into waking life, and gayly dip
The rosy prow 'mid waters ruby bright.

With slow majestic pace and lurid blaze
Upstreams the glorious God of sea and earth,
The dazzled heavens revel in his rays,
Mountain and wave reflect their golden mirth ;
The fair white town sings forth a hymn of praise
In joyous paean to the new day's birth.

MIDNIGHT TIDE ON THE CAPE.

Away, across the waters dark and wide.
Far, far as eye and Fancy's wing can fly,
From out the arms of amorous sea and sky,
Forth springs a sprite, it is the midnight tide !
Her feet are silvery white, her robes of spray
Hide all her beauty in a mist of light
Caught from the stars, as on in dazzling flight
She leaps and frolics towards the Table-bay.

Aloft her snowy arms with glee she flings,
In rhythm to the waves' melodious tune,
Till, maddened as the music fiercer rings,
Upon the rocks she sinks in sighing swoon
An instant ; back into the sea she springs.
To speed away, low laughing at the moon !

ATHWART THE EQUATOR.

Radiant and slow, the velvet waters o'er,
Uprose the golden crescent of the moon,
Tinging with mellow light the night's blue noon,
Thrusting ajar the morning's purpled door.
Sweet smile the stars and answering coos the breeze,
Quiescent breathe the billows in their sleep,
Nestled within the Equator's cradle deep,
Whence flows the foam-tipped nectar of the seas.

On, on, and on, smooth sails our trusty ship,
Full-freighted with its load of throbbing hearts.
The sparkling eye, the oft-kissed ruby lip,
Beams with the joy the fleeting hour imparts.
All in a world our own we careless sip
The wine of life, brewed 'mid the ocean-marts.

TO DEATH.

Oh ! cruel death, shalt thou never grow old,
Will thy hand its merciless task ne'er cease.
Thine arms wilt thou never cast down in peace,
And round thee forever thy mantle fold ?

Oh ! phantom king, thou hast stolen away
The soul of my love, to thy regions dim.
If thou hast pity—ah ! whisper to him,
A chaplet of tears on his heart I lay !

Whisper, that Memory shall ceaselessly sob
Her song of requiem o'er the dead past.
Love's sorrowing heart shall wearily throb—
Love's eyes be dimmed by thy shadow o'ercast,
Press on those lips, thou didst ruthlessly rob
For me one long tremulous kiss—the last !

THE PARTING OF THE YEAR.

The midnight hour had come. With tearful eyes
And sad the Old Year strained I to my breast.
For we were loth to part—his lips I pressed
All tenderly in answer to his sighs.
A generous lover he ; to say good-bye
Wrung heart and soul, bowed was his head and
chilled
The hand with gifts and blessings lately filled.
'Twas hard to part—the dear Old Year and I.

Lo ! as he lingered, came thro' casement pane
A silvery summons echoing far and near.
He faltered, trembled, gasped, then thrust
atwain
The casement, vanished in the starlight clear,
No vestige leaving of his happy reign,
While hand in hand stood I and the New Year !

LOVE POEMS.

LOVE.

From whence he does come and whither he goes,
There is not a mortal in all the world knows.

He comes in a smile, he goes in a kiss,

He dies in the birth of a maiden's bliss,

He wakes in a tear, he lives in a sigh,

He lingers in hope, refusing to die ;

But whence he does come, and whither he goes,

There is not a mortal in all the world knows !

LOVE'S DESIRE.

Make of thine arms a wreath, Love !
Entwine me in its link.
Make of thy lips a cup, Love !
Where kisses I may drink.

Make of thine eyes a torch, Love !
The happy hours to light.
Make of thy smile a dream, Love !
To fill with joy the night.

Make of thy voice a song, Love !
That shall forever sing.
Make of thy heart a throne, Love !
And crown me as its king.

CLEOPATRA.

I.

Of human love the queen,
Wanton, and bold, yet coy ;
Ruling by womanly mien,
Danger and death thy toy.

II.

A thousand women's eyes
In thine mysterious shine ;
A thousand lovers' sighs
Around thy name entwine.

CLEOPATRA'S DREAM.

Oh Antony !
Last night, in dreams, again
I felt your kisses rain
Upon my lips, till through
Them all my soul you drew.
And soon I trembling felt
Those kisses softly melt
Warm on my neck, and rest
Upon each heaving breast.
But oh ! how hot they fell
Above my heart, ah, well !
Just then I woke.—Alas !
So sweet a dream should pass,
And leave me longing still,
To feel those kisses thrill
All through the night,
My heart's delight.

Oh Antony !
Again upon me fell
A dream, and in its spell
I passionately bound
You with my limbs around—

I felt your arms enfold
Me, and you closely hold
Me, and I felt your heart
Throb—throb—and wildly start
As Love's rapturous pain
Thrill'd mad through every vein,
Glowing, your lips on mine
Burned like some sweet hot wine;
And when you sank to rest,
Faint, panting, on my breast,
Within my arms I kept
You—as you softly slept,
 All through the night !
 Egypt's delight.

CLEOPATRA'S NIGHT ON THE NILE.

I.

Away on the green flowing river,
Last eve, 'neath the moon's silver shiver,
In my silk curtained boat,
I wandered afloat,
Alone, with my slaves at the helm,
The waves, and the sky's spangled realm.

II.

On my bosom the red roses grouped
'Neath my hot pulses withered and drooped,
And the pink flesh I tore
Where thy lips wandered o'er,
Till my heart seemed to sink in a swoon,
As I poured out my woes to the moon !

III.

For, with yearning, sore-sick was my heart,
Faint with hungering for thee, far apart
'Mid Romans, my Roman,
Thou dearest of foemen,
Till I prayed the Nile's pearly billow
Would steep me in Lethe's cold pillow.

IV.

But the wave danced, and shimmered, and sung,
O'er my couch, its spray mockingly flung ;
But it cooled not my breast,
Nor my eyelids, oppressed
With the night's sleepless longing and ache,
Till I writhed like a slave at the stake.

V.

Oh ! the tongue of the breeze like a flame
Licked and scorched, where you kisses would claim.
Like a river of fire
Leapt my blood with desire
To hold you, to fold you, to press you,
With lips and with arms to caress you !

VI.

Afloat on the green flowing river,
Last night, 'neath the moon's silver shiver,
While all the world slept,
With madness I wept
For thou of the Romans, my Roman,
Love's swordsman, thou dearest of foemen !

THE ARAB LOVERS.

“ Farewell, love ! while thy caress
Still thrills on my lips.
Farewell ! for the day wanes less,
And the great sun dips
His fiery head in the west.
The hot winds away
O’er the desert’s burning breast
Sweep after the day.
Farewell !—ah !—one long deep kiss.
’Twill brighten the hours
Of night’s dark dreary abyss
With dreamland flowers.—
On eyes—on lips—on hand—
Hot thy kisses cling—
Farewell ! to my father’s band
I fly on the wing
Of my brave wild Arab steed.
’Tis death here to dwell—
Away ! away, I must speed
Till the morn—Farewell ! ”

“ Nay—speed not over the plain,
For the night creeps near.
The hour of the lion’s reign
Will soon, soon be here.

The panther's eye gleaming greed,
With dull glare alight,
Will track thee as on thou'll speed
Through the darksome night,
And bear thee a captive sweet
To his bloody lair,
And devour with hungry teeth
Thy soft flesh so fair,
And he'll quench his cruel thirst
In the sweet warm flood,
As swift from thy blue veins burst
The stream of thy blood,
Till drunk with the crimson flow
From thy tender breast,
He'll sink in a gluttonous glow
By thy side to rest ! ”

.
“ Soul of my heart ! tremble not,
For here in my arms,
As we speed the desert hot,
Rest safe from alarms ;
In a dayat green and fair,
Where the soft winds sigh,
I will bear thee to my lair,
'Neath the night's deep sky.
For I Love's panther shall be,
Thy sweets to devour,
With rapturous panting glee
As bee sucks the flower,

The teeth of my kisses sting
Deep thy bosom sweet,
My lips shall hungering cling
To thy slender feet.
And over thy lips and eyes
Burning kisses pour,
And drink deep with happy sighs
Of love's sweetest store !
The stars and the envious moon—
And the glow-worm red—
Shall pierce the night's paling gloom,
To gloat o'er our bed !
And we'll kiss the hours away,
Till the east unfurl,
The banner of radiant day
In splendorous whirl !”

.
’Twas the darkest hour of night,
For the moon hung low,
And clouds in scurrying flight
Swept over her glow.
Afar in the purple east
The stars, one by one,
Their silvery vigil ceased,
For the great red sun
Would soon his fiery rim
Shoot up through the gloom
Of the far horizon's brim,
To vanquish the moon.

And a slumberous silence hung
O'er the desert air—
No longer their wild howl rung ;
For hushed in their lair,
The tiger and panther slept—
But a mighty one
Still roamed and stealthily crept,
E'er the day begun,
To the dayat's cooling shade,
Where the waters sprung
'Mid a green and mossy glade.
Where sheltering hung
The boughs of the desert tree,
Came the lion brave,
With his bold mane flowing free,
In the spring to lave—
And slowly his shadow fell
O'er the sleeping pair,
And amazed his eyes did dwell
On the faces fair
Of those lovers closely bound
In abandon sweet,
Heart to heart—smooth limbs enwound,
While pulse to pulse beat ;
As in dreams they felt again
The rapturous kiss—
The thrill—the sigh—and the pain
Of Love's deepest bliss.

.

Slow fell his shadow away—
And noiseless his stride,
He stole in the moonlight ray
To his tawny bride,
Where, deep in her darksome den,
He told her the tale
Of the wondrous love of men,
Till the night grew pale !

.
Slow the dawn with lambent flame
Crept over the plain.
Afar in its faint light came
A shadowy train
Of horsemen galloping on,
For deadly intent,
As hurrying with the dawn
Swift speed to them lent.
They sought the fugitive child
Of their noble chief.
Their hearts with revenge beat wild,
For disgrace and grief
In their chieftain's proud breast burned,
And in Allah's name
Their course to the dayat turned.
In silence and shame
They gathered a dusky throng,
And never a wave
Of pity for youthful wrong
Swept their purpose grave.

Close around the sleeping pair—
As in dreams they lay,
Lip to lip and mingling hair,
While the amber ray
Of the morning softly stole
With a tender kiss,—
The last sad pitiful dole
Of their short-lived bliss—
Press'd the dark-brow'd Arab clan.

Lo ! the chieftain's spear
Flashed aloft—then deadly ran—
Ne'er trembling with fear,
Transfix'd with swift cruel blow,
With deadliest dart—
In the stream of death's red flow,
Their forms—heart to heart !

.
The moon with shimmering light
Stole up through the sky,
As on in hungry flight
With fierce growl and cry,
To the dayat's dainty feet,
With red tooth and claw,
Sped each hungry howling beast
With ravenous maw,—
To pause in the sombre glare
Of the lion's eye.
As he held his vigil there
With his fierce mate nigh,

As mournful they crouched beside—
With strange watchful grief—
The dead Arab and his bride
Through the night hours brief,
While the moon her vigil kept,
And the stars uprose,
And the night-dews softly wept
O'er their human woes !

THE SUMMER OF LOVE.

Fold thy wings, happy hour, and rest here awhile,
 'Neath the spell of her beauty and grace,
'Mid the perfumed shadows my soul to beguile,
 'Neath the flower-like charm of her face ;
Let me drink in the music of love's every tone,
 Like the whisper of angels above.
Oh ! sweetest of women, for you—you alone,
 Is this hour of our summer of love.

Oh ! sweet dreamy eyes all your splendour unveil,
 In their depths let me lingering gaze.
Faint round us the roses their fragrance exhale,
 In the twilight's pale mystical haze.
On wings rosy tipped the daylight has flown,
 Venus glittering shines out above.
Oh ! sweetest of women, for you—you alone,
 Is this hour of our summer of love.

These soft trembling hands that I fold warm in
 mine,
 Pressing close to my fast-throbbing heart—
These fair golden tresses sweet scented like wine,
 Of thy beauty a glorious part ;

These lips where dwell kisses, the sweetest e'er
known,

Filled with rapture all pleasures above,

Oh ! sweetest of women, are mine—mine alone,

In this hour of our summer of love.

LOVE UNHEEDED.

I.

Groping in the darksome way
And drear, where buried lay
The love of bygone years,
My spirit wandered,
Sank down and pondered
Weary, in a vale of tears.

II.

Musing sad, in doubt and fear,
She knew not Love stole near,
Laughing low at sigh and moan,
Heard not the winging—
Felt not the stinging
Of his shaft—till he had flown !

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ?

Have you forgotten the bright happy hours
That smiled on our summer of love,
When we gathered sweet sympathy's flowers,
And prized them all others above ?
Have you forgotten the long happy nights,
Of music and melody's song,
When your eyes told love's tale 'mid flowers and
lights,
And hum of the gay brilliant throng ?
Oh ! dearer than life was love's gracious boon—
Have you forgotten that sweet spell so soon ?

Have you forgotten the future we saw
In the firelight glimmering dim ?
The glorious future, years without flaw,
With love filling life to the brim.
Have you forgotten the vows whispered low,
In the hush of tremulous light,
The promise—the kisses that throbbed with love's
glow,
The pledge of that rapturous night ?
Oh ! dearer than life was love's precious boon.
Have you forgotten that sweet spell so soon ?

THE CHÂLET BY THE RIVER.

By the river's rippling flow,
Where the soft winds fragrant blow,
And the shadows stretch below
Where the fishes come and go,
And the stately swan-birds lave
In the green and sunny wave,
My love and I together,
In the golden summer weather,
Laughed and sang the hours away,
Where the sunshine dreaming lay,
In the chalet by the river.

There we watched each little boat,
Gaily laden past us float,
As we heard each silvery note,
From the song-bird's downy throat,
Thrilling all the long day through
'Neath the hazy summer blue ;
Where the cloud-boats idly fly,
O'er the river of the sky.
In our hearts deep rapture sank,
As from love's sweet cup we drank,
In the chalet by the river.

When the tender gloaming fell,
With its shadowy mystic spell,
Over river, vale, and dell,
In deep solitude to dwell,
My love and I fond plighted
Our troth in bliss united,
While our hearts sweet rhythm kept,
As the moonlight softly crept,
Slyly through the latticed rail,
Listening to love's happy tale,
In the chalet by the river.

A STORM OF KISSES.

What bliss is there in all the world
To equal that when love unfurled
His crimson flag, while passion whirl'd
The soul, and then exulting hurl'd
 Within the heart's abyss,
 A burning luscious kiss !

A kiss that lip to lip fast bound,
Sending the hot blood coursing round
Through every purple vein that wound
Its supple way, until it drowned
 With crimson burning rush,
 That sweet kiss in a blush !

And swift another kiss was born
To live one rapturous moment warm.
Then softly die beneath the storm
That blazed in eyes whom love did arm
 With tender glances there,
 Kisses to still ensnare !

Oh ! then a storm of kisses sent
O'er lips and eyes hot ravishment,
On cheek and neck their fury spent,
And resting there in sweet content
 To blend in one long kiss,
 And melting, die in bliss.

STOLEN KISSES.

There are kisses that purple the lips where they
press,

Until swollen with passionate maddening greed ;
There are kisses that fall like a holy caress,
Sacred seal of the true lovers' heavenly creed.

There are kisses that burn with a sweet subtle fire,
Like the glow in the heart of golden old wine ;
There are kisses that swoon in the wave of desire,
As it sweeps o'er the soul in a rapture divine.

But oh ! the most thrilling, the sweetest of kisses,
Are the kisses that silently fall like the dew,
The sweet stolen kisses—that nobody misses,
The sly pilfered kisses—that never are true !

LOST KISSES.

Oh ! where are the kisses we gave that night
In the golden spring of Love's blushing year ;
Oh ! where the kisses we gave when the light
Of its radiant morn dawned bright and clear ?

Oh ! where the kisses that slept on my breast—
Oh ! where the kisses that fell on mine eyes—
Oh ! where the kisses, the sweetest and best.
That clung to my lips with lingering sighs ?

Lost kisses, I fain would gather ye back
Where'er on the shore of the Past ye be.
'Twould be more than mortal could do—alack !
For ye would outnumber the sands o' the sea !

A FALLEN STAR.

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The heavens are raining stars to-night
Athwart the southern sea,
And one I've caught in its golden flight,
A captive for you and me.

It shall be our world, this fallen star.
Its silence to life we'll thrill
With the music of kisses echoing far
O'er dreamy river and hill.

The voice of love shall alone be heard
In its silent stately halls ;
The fire of love shall alone be stirred
'Mid its frozen crystal walls.

Oh ! waif of the silver midnight sky,
'Neath the Southern Cross afar
We'll live, we'll love, aye ! we'll never die,
In thy realm, oh ! fallen star.

JILTED.

So 'tis sin to love you, my sweet !

Oh, God ! can it be,
That the love which tenderly beat,
Between you and me,
Should change to an unholy thing,
At a word—the spell
Of a white-robed priest and a ring,
The chime of a bell?

Let me look in your fair, false face.

'Tis ever the same,
With its beauteous lines of grace
In its ruddy frame.
How oft as I've sailed the deep seas
Those eyes were my light—
While your voice echoed on the breeze
Through my watch at night.

I've seen your smile many a time
Flash out of the wave.

It's held me in every clime

'Mid the gay and grave.

Oh, God, was it only for this

I've loved you these years,
To feel all my hopes and my bliss
Melt swift as my tears !

And here is your poor little ring ;
 Its mission is done.
See ! I crush the frail golden thing,
 As I would—false one !—
The life in your treacherous heart.
 Ah ! time sets all aright.
He's slow, but he'll sure play his part
 To revenge me—Good-night !

DANAË.

Within a brazen chamber cavern'd deep,
Where flickering lights their shadowy vigils keep,
And royal skins, torn from some lion's lair,
Their tawny splendour scatter everywhere,
While jewelled shrines reflect the amber light,
Low-burning at their gods through all the night,
Destined to hold its dreaming sombre sway
Through years untold—the sleeping Danaë lay.

A watchful slave slow-fanned the perfumed air,
Another thrilled the silence hovering there,
As from the lute low melody she swept,
That like the breeze of summer softly crept
Thro' every dream that cast its silver spell
O'er drooping lids, and snowy bosom's swell,
O'er all her charms and glorious grace of limb,
As like a pearl within the purple rim
Of her soft couch the prison'd Danaë slept,
While tender cadence sweetest measure kept.

And as the music-flowing rhythm falls
And rises, all its melody recalls
Her childhood's years, and 'neath its dreamy strain
She sees the sunshine and the summer rain,

She feels the night breeze fan her tresses fair,
She gazes on the moon's bright bosom bare,
She stretches forth her hand in joyous bliss,
And wafts to every silver star a kiss ;
And as her dreams' sweet visions fade away,
Her soul yearns for the banished light of day,
As mournfully her waking glances fall
Around the shadow of her prison's wall.

“ Cease ! Myros, thy lute's sweet heavenly strain.
’Tis only in dreams I hear without pain
Its mellow note—Clito, bind up my hair,
The breeze of my dream seems lingering there ;
I fain would forget the green earth above,
The stars and the moon, the sunlight and love.”
Then fast-falling tears bedimmed her bright eyes,
And jewelled the gauze that fluttering lies
Across her white breast, where longing and grief
Found vent in sad sighs and tearful relief.
“ Begone ! gentle slaves, I'd fain be alone.
The Gods I'll implore my fate to atone.”

Then swiftly away they silently stole,
While Danaë poured out all her passionate soul
In a prayer laden down with piteous words,
That, wavering, strove like poor fettered birds
To feebly sever the pitiless snare
That bound her, and held her a prisoner there.

"Helios ! Helios ! hear me," she cried.
"Giver of sunshine, life's glory and pride.
Am I forever to bear this sad lot,
Through fear and a hatred paternal begot ?
Break, scatter my bonds, these brazen walls burst.
For sunshine, for love, and freedom I thirst ;"
Away on a sigh the plaintive prayer wings
Its flight where perpetual melody sings,
And Zeus in his dreaming heard the faint sigh,
As it sank on his breast to trembling lie.

"'Tis a maiden's breath," he wakening cried,
"The sigh of a maid I've sought far and wide ;
Lead me, sweet messenger, to her abode,"
And straightway his golden chariot he strode ;
On the wings of the sigh exultingly spread,
Plunged thro' the veil of the morn's rosy bed,
Thro' star-blazoned clouds, and swiftly was whirl'd
On the brow of the earth's fair flow'ry world,
Ceasing not his sweeping, luminous flight,
Till he flooded with streams of radiant light
The caverned gloom, dispelled with his glow
The darkness of years that reign'd there below,
Revealing the sumptuous beauty and grace
Of Danaë's fair form and starry-eyed face.

Zeus then in a moment of mad desire,
Transformed by the charm of love's potent fire,
His God-form changed to a shower of gold,
Enveloping in his amorous fold

Each ivory-tinted, rose-tipped breast,
Each fair rounded limb with rapture caressed,
Swift rent in his longing fiery haste,
The zone circled round her supple white waist,
Then deep burned the sting of each golden kiss,
And wild thrilled her heart with answering bliss :
With strange new delight, with rapturous pain
Was born the knowledge that never would wane,
Ne'er leave her life void, but like some fair noon,
Ensplendour, enripen her with its sweet bloom.

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Soon o'er her senses a subtle spell hung,
The god's golden kisses burningly clung—
Weary with ecstasy, melting to rest
In the billowy cradle of her breast.

A SPIRIT LOVE.

I've sought for love through all the year,
Unceasing sought both far and near,
Longing again to fondly rest
Upon some loving faithful breast,
Seeking a kindred soul to find,
That through sweet sympathy would bind
Our life together in its spell,
And never for one hour to dwell
Apart, alone, but ever near,
Bound closely in those chains so dear ;
But I have sought, alas ! in vain,
Through tears and bitterness and pain.

Once in a singer's mellow voice
Its tone made all my heart rejoice.
Here dwells the love I seek, I cried,
But when the song had ceased—love died.
Again I thought I saw it shine
In eyes that gazed deep into mine :
I only saw reflected there
The love that I alone did bear.
And once again I thought I felt
Its thrill, as on my lips there dwelt
A kiss, so sweet, so warm,—alas !
E'en as it burned I felt love pass.

A poet's verse my soul deep-stirred,
Love breath'd in every glowing word,
But like a dream supremely fair
It vanished—e'er I held it there.
But why should Love, who seeketh ever
Me to bind, his chains thus sever ?
Because a spirit love doth claim,
And jealous guard the sacred flame
That glows and burns within my heart,
Clear, bright, and pure, from earth apart,
Until death's portals wide are thrown,
And to that love my soul hath flown.

THE SONG OF SLEEP.

When Sleep, sweet Sleep, with silent band,
Steals near my couch to softly lay
On weary eyes her gentle hand—
Swift vanish all the cares of day.
Then one by one that silent throng
Prepare to follow Sleep's command
And weave into my dreams a song,
A song too sweet for mortal land.

They sing through all the long dark night
In tones so wildly, strangely sweet—
Of hopes fulfilled and joy's delight,
And far-off friends once more to greet,
And then of love they softly sing,
Of love restored, until each strain
Thrills through my heart and seems to bring
The happy Past all back again.

For Love is mine once more to hold—
Kiss back to life its dear dim eyes,
Close to my trembling heart to fold
The shadow of those severed ties.
Then rapturous tears my pillow steep,
As round me those sweet visions press

With wondrous song, till softly Sleep
Veils all in deep forgetfulness.

And when the dawn of waking day,
Full freighted with a thousand cares,
Creeps to my couch to rudely lay
On slumbering eyes her hand, and tears
With ruthless grasp the veil apart,
That Sleep, sweet-lidded, wove in vain,
Still sings the song within my heart,
The echo of my dream's refrain !

THE SOUL OF THE SAPPHIRE.

How soft upon my hand it shone,
A pledge of love, that azure stone,
So deep and pure its every tone,
Like sea wave's heart when gently blown.

It seemed within its depths to hide
A secret from the ocean wide.
Was it a tear from some pale bride,
Above whose grave the blue waves glide ?

It might have been a star that fell,
And, caught within the sea's deep well,
For ages frozen there did dwell
Beneath some mermaid's mystic spell.

Perchance she decked her flowing hair
With its blue glim'ring beauty rare,
Or caught it 'mid the flowers fair,
Across her snowy bosom bare.

And oft some fancy made me think,
Within its beauty slept a link
To that far world upon whose brink
The soul to rest doth calmly sink.

One night when soft-eyed sleep had flown,
And silence reigned the world alone,
My heart with sorrow tempest-blown
To my lost love seemed nearer grown.

With tears I bathed the holy ring
That to my life his love did bring,
And as my kisses warm did cling
There chanced a strange mysterious thing !

Beneath my lips I felt it thrill,
As though some wondrous power did fill
The jewel's heart with pulse and will,
To bid my tears and grief be still.

And as I gazed in rapt surprise
Within the sapphire's depths, two eyes
Shone out as blue as summer skies,
Beneath a brow of angel guise.

And lo ! a lovely spirit face
Smil'd sadly with a shadowy grace,
Yet seemed to hold no form or place
Within the sapphire's gleaming space.

And then I breathless seemed to hear
A voice, that on my listening ear
Fell with a music soft and clear
As far-off bells that echo near.

“ I am a maiden’s soul,” it said,
“ Imprison’d in this sapphire bed.
Through many countless years now fled
My being’s numbered with the dead.

“ The soul of him I loved doth keep
A weary vigil ’neath the deep,
While hopeless longings sadly steep
With bitterness his dreamless sleep.

“ A mariner he was of old,
Who sailed the seas with bark of gold ;
He would have been my bridegroom bold,
Had not the waters o’er him roll’d.

“ True is thy heart ; I’ve felt it beat
For him whose soul you long to meet.
Ah ! by that love you hold so sweet,
Release me, my lost love to greet.”

Then faint and low the sweet voice grew,
As in the sapphire’s deep’ning hue,
With tearful smile, those eyes of blue
Slow faded from my wondering view.

And then I woke to find it all
A dream, whose spell did o’er me fall,
And with its mystic power recall
Some spirit from the grave’s dark pall.

But never from my memory fled
That strange sad message from the dead,
And oft my wand'ring fancy led
Me to that far-off ocean bed,

Where in his bark, amid the gold,
Slept that dead mariner of old,
Whose weary soul did vigil hold
For her he loved through years untold.

And oft I trembling seemed to hear
That pleading voice so low and clear—
And feel the spirit presence near,
That slept within my jewel dear.

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At last upon the summer sea,
One eve, I set the sapphire free,
Deep in the blue waves' depths to be
Love's captive for eternity !

GOOD NIGHT.

Silent the room—
Thine empty place
Where smiled thy face,
Is wrapped in gloom.
 Dear Love—good night !

Still echoes near,
Like whispering birds
The sweet love-words,
That thrilled mine ear.
 Oh ! Love—good night !

Tho' far apart,
In dreams we'll meet
And feel the beat,
Of heart to heart.
 My Love—good night !

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MY SANCTUARY.

There is a chamber in my heart
Sacred, from all the world apart.
Trembling and sad within its door
I enter, all my griefs to pour.
Again, when pleasure's wreath has bound
My soul and senses gaily round,
I seek its silence, there to store
Treasures of joys that are no more.
And lo ! Love's mirage oft appears
To rise in splendour—set in tears.
Then in that chamber, steeped in gloom,
My hopes of love I deep entomb.

Around those chamber walls are spread
The spirit pictures of the dead.
My mother's face shines softly there,
Framed in its wealth of auburn hair ;
Her earnest eyes, with tender smile,
Lifting my drooping soul awhile
Out of the toil, above the strain
For all this earthly loss and gain ;
And in the shadow of her face
Dimly another's eyes I trace—
A father's features come and go,
In memory's fitful ebb and flow.

There happy hours of childhood dear
Steal back on spirit wings to cheer
The long sad days, the nights of thought
Amid the pictures memory wrought ;
But oh ! one face I ever see—
Asleep—awake—it follows me.
A noble beauty calmly lies
On lips and brow and loving eyes.
Tho' that brave heart's fond beat is still,
That oft with rapture's pulse would thrill,
Dear eyes, within thy depths still shine
A husband's love—forever mine !

THE PICTURE ON THE WALL.

Oh ! my eyes are aching
 With the tears that constant pour.
Oh ! my heart is breaking
 For a face I'll see no more.
And my soul is sighing
 In my dreams the long night through,
And my hopes are dying—
 As a flower parched for dew.

Bless thee ! joys so fleeting !
 For the memories sweet ye give,
Of the rapturous meeting
 When 'twas heaven but to live.
And our hearts were beating
 Close, in unison divine,
And thy lips, love greeting,
 Melted burningly on mine.

But 'tis only dreaming
 When thy voice thrills sweet to me,
And 'tis only seeming
 When thy smiling face I see ;
As the moon's cold beaming
 Creeps past my couch to fall
With its pale light streaming
 O'er thy picture on the wall.

A FANTASY.

In my low and narrow bed,
Every dream forever fled,
Cold earth pillowing my head,
I shall sleep when I am dead.

Oh ! that sweet unceasing rest.
While the world above my breast,
Struggling with its cares oppressed,
Wakes no echo in my nest.

Then o'er me slowly stealing,
While I sleep, unheeding feeling,
Past regret and vain appealing,
Creeps decay, its spell revealing.

In the shimmer of my hair
It shall weave its grayness there.
Touch my cheek, so round and fair,
With a blemish past repair.

And my eyes shall droop and melt,
And my lips, where kisses dwelt,
Wither 'neath the cruel stealth
Of that last long kiss unfelt.

And each curve and supple grace
Of my form shall it efface,
And death's hideousness replace
All resemblance to my race.

'Then the earth's mysterious power
With new birth shall me endower,
And I'll wake some sunny hour,
On her breast a beauteous flower.

And the sun's caresses sweet
Stir my petalled heart to beat,
Till my perfumed soul shall fleet,
Swift my lost love's kiss to meet.

And our mingled souls shall soar
Far away, the wide world o'er,
On through heaven's golden door,
Into bliss forever more.

OH, NIGHT OF TEARS !

I.

Oh, night of tears ! deep in thy gloom
The star of Hope thou dost entomb,
While Care grim-visag'd watch doth keep,
And Grief's tempestuous waves o'ersweep
With bitterness the wearied soul,
Then Memory sadly doth unroll
With trembling hand her scroll of years.
And dip them in thy flood, oh, tears !
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II.

Oh, night of tears ! a dawn shall rise
Across thy drooping sombre skies,
And sweep the clouds of sorrow by
That darkly now across thee fly.
Before its lambent glorious ray
The dawn of Heaven's endless day
Shall banish all thy gloom and fears
And bitterness, oh, night of tears !

DEATH'S LITANY.

Come back from the grave !
 Oh dear dead heart—
Come back from the grave !
 My soul's best part—
Come back from the grave !
 To our desolate hearth.
Come back from the grave !
 For my lips are chill—
Come back from the grave !
 With thy kiss to thrill—
Come back from the grave !
 All my life to fill !
Come back from the grave !
 To this empty space,
Come back from the grave !
 In my arms thy place—
Come back from the grave,
 Lay thy face to my face !
Come back from the grave !
 Oh ! thou happy past—
Come back from the grave !
 Let me hold thee fast—
Come back from the grave !
 Take me home at last !

A DREAM OF THE SEA.

I dreamed I was sleeping
 Deep, deep 'neath the sea,
And a mermaid, weeping,
 Kept watch over me.
Each amber tress gleaming
 Soft shadowed her face.
Fair as the moon's beaming
 Her form I could trace,
 In the shimmer and blow
 Of the waves as they flow.

And as I lay listening
 In silence and dread,
'Mid the sea-weeds dim glist'ning
 I knew I was dead ;
For round me faint ringing,
 Sweet, solemn, and slow,
The mermaids were singing
 My requiem below,
 In the shimmer and blow
 Of the waves as they flow.

From their coral nests trooping
 The pale-eyed fish come.

And round me all grouping
In wondering hum,
Their fins gently waving
A sad welcome show.
As I rest never craving
Their treasures to know,
In the shimmer and blow
Of the waves as they flow.

Then my hollow eyes turning,
Gaze up through the deep
With an infinite yearning,
As past the ships sweep.
And sometimes come straying
Dear voices I know,
And I hear them all praying
For me sleeping low,
In the shimmer and blow
Of the waves as they flow.

SONG TO THE SOUTHERN OCEAN.

I.

Oh ! sea so fair,
Oh ! sea so bright,
With waves forever leaping ;
What treasures rare,
What gems of light,
Are in thy bosom sleeping !

II.

Oh ! sea so blue,
Oh ! sea so cool,
Oh ! sea forever fleeting ;
Whence came thy hue,
Whence came thy rule,
Whence came thy waters seething !

III.

Oh ! sea so deep,
Oh ! sea so wide,
Thy waves are ever singing
Of spells you keep,
Of scenes you hide,
Where mermaids' songs are ringing !

IV.

Oh ! sea so grand,
Oh ! sea so great,
Oh ! sea with endless pinion—
A gallant band
Doth laugh at fate,
And trust to thy dominion.

V.

Their ships sail out,
Their ships sail in,
Thy trackless billows over ;
Thy dangers scout
The port to win,
Drop sail and land the rover !

VI.

Oh ! sea of pearl,
Oh ! sea of gold,
Oh ! sea 'neath sunset flying—
Within thy whirl,
Within thy fold,
How fare the dead men lying ?

VII.

Oh ! sea speak low,
Oh ! sea tell true,
The tale of their undoing.
Doth blossoms glow
With silver dew
Their deep sea homes renewing ?

VIII.

Doth mermaids wind
Their green gold hair
Around their dead hearts—weaving
A chain to bind,
A net to snare
Their souls to endless grieving ?

IX.

Doth kisses fire
Their lips so cold,
With Life's sweet spell returning—
Doth dear Desire
Her charms unfold
'Neath mermaid's glances burning ?

X.

Or, do they rest
With sightless eyes,
Within the bosomed hollow
Of icy breast,
The pulseless prize
The mermaids love to follow ?

XI.

Oh ! sea of noon !
Oh ! sea of light !
Oh, sea of wondrous splendor !
I love thy moon,
I love thy night,
Thy gloaming, gleaming tender.

XII.

Sing on, oh sea !
Sing on, oh wave !
In thine own sublimity.
Thy song so free,
Thy chant so brave
Of God and God's infinity.

THE GOOD SHIP HOPE.

Oh ! bright were the skies and radiant the days
 When the year was flowing in,
And the good ship Hope in a golden haze
 We launched on the waves to win
The harbor safe of that glorious shore,
 The land of success and peace.
Where the tide of despair with moan and roar
 Shall sink and forever cease.

Oh ! sombre the skies and dreary the days
 When the year was ebbing out,
And the poor ship Hope in a misty haze
 Sank deep in the sands of doubt,
All shattered her mast and tattered her sails
 And battered her prow and helm,
With the seams and scars of a hundred gales
 'Mid adversity's stormy realm.

But we'll dry our tears and we'll laugh at fate,
 And we'll rig her out again.

And old Captain Love and his trusty mate
 Shall guide her across the main ;
And we'll freight her full with many a prayer
 For that shore beyond life's sea,
Till into its harbour she'll proudly bear,
 And God shall her anchor be !

THE SONG OF THE LEAVES.

Blow wind ! blow wind ! merrily sway
Our cradle of branches in boisterous play.

Pour rain ! pour rain ! beat on our boughs,
Freshen and brighten, our drooping heads rouse.

Beam sun ! beam sun ! gild us anew,
Drink from our green cups the sweet morning dew.

Sing birds ! sing birds ! deep in our shade,
The long sunny hours, till daylight shall fade.

Sleep moon ! sleep moon ! softly thy light
Woos us and lulls us to slumber—Good night !

A WOMAN OF LONG AGO.

AN ALLEGORY.

There lived in the long, long ago
A woman whose beauty, like wine,
Thrilled men with a strange subtle glow
Of happiness almost divine.

Their hearts in her tresses she bound,
Like birds snared in a golden net ;
Their souls in her loveliness drowned,
Like suns that forever are set.

Their life with her red lips she drank,
As a drunkard the deep cup drains,
And the glance of her bright eyes sank
Like dull fire in their throbbing veins.

She cast them away one by one,
This woman of long ago,
Pale and dead from the snare she spun
To the depths of bitterest woe.

And each lost life over her shed
A bloom and a charm ever new,
For the haunting eyes of the dead
Ever gleamed from her eyes of blue.

Her lips with their hot kisses shone,
Ripe as grapes full of purple blood,
While her voice with the dead men's tone
Swept the world with melody's flood.

With their flesh her round limbs were white,
And the shadows her hair among
Were the dews from their weeping sight,
Bitter tears from the dead men wrung.

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She e'en lives in her splendor now,
This woman of long, long ago,
The jewels of shame on her brow,
Her voice with the same magic flow

As it rang in the olden time,
In her riotous sumptuous bloom,
And she revels in every clime,
Laughing men to their endless doom.

THE TWO BANDS OF SISTERHOOD.

Hear ! The wail of womanhood,
As from their haunt
Of sin and want
Creep the fallen sisterhood ;
All through the night,
Wayworn in flight,
Wander the street sisterhood ;
No friend is near,
No love to cheer—
God pity that sisterhood !

See ! The joy of womanhood.
In silken sheen
Like some fair dream,
Behold ! the pure sisterhood ;
Through festive night,
In dance so light,
Whirls the happy sisterhood ;
Love is her slave,
Nothing to crave,
Blest, fortunate sisterhood !

Shame ! Pitiless womanhood,
As in thy right
Of virtue's might
Thou spurn'st the lost sisterhood,
Back to their haunt
Of sin and want.
Alas ! thou poor sisterhood,
Is there no nest
Where thou can rest
Unsinning, frail sisterhood ?

Behold ! The end of womanhood,
As in his lair
Death unites there
The two bands of sisterhood.
Forgiving all,
'Neath his dark pall
Soft sleep the pure sisterhood ;
No sin to fear,
God's love is here
To redeem thee, frail sisterhood.

THE TOILERS.

Wearily, wearily, work we all.
Some for fortune and some for fame,
Wearily, wearily, meet the call
Of duty's voice through praise or blame.

Some of us for mothers,
Some of us for gain,
Some of us for brothers,
Some of us for pain.

Steadily, steadily, toil away,
Seeking our station to grace,
Steadfastly, steadfastly, work or play,
Filling each his rightful place.

Through the night's gloom,
Through the day's bloom,
Through years that loom,
Through our sad doom.

Wearily, wearily, toil we on,
Never to rest, never to wait,
Wearily, wearily, all along
Life's stormy road to Heav'n's gate.

THE DEAD ACTOR.

Oh ! eyes forever dim,
And lips forever mute,
Framed in thy coffin's rim,
Like some poor stringless lute,
Is set thy poor dead face ;
Forever done thy task,
To charm with mimic grace ;
Beneath death's fading mask,
Thy art hath left no trace.

'Thy stage—the graveyard lone,
'Thy part—a sleeper low,
Thy praise—the wind's sweet moan,
When gentle breezes blow,
Or summer storms o'ersweep
With tears thy grassy mound,
Where to thy slumber deep
Shall steal no waking sound,
While Death his watch doth keep.

Then shall the dead man's foe,
On thy once busy brain,
Feast, revel in the flow
Of wit that doth remain,
Creep in thy inmost heart,
To live where love once beat.
Devour with hungry dart,
Slow melt with subtle heat
Thy being's every part.

Beyond grim death's decay
Thy soul shall proudly soar,
To meet in bright array
Thy children gone before ;
Creations of thy brain—
Born of thy noble art,
They greet thee once again,
Each dear familiar part,
Here ! is thy heaven's reign.

TO AN ENGLISH ACTOR,

WHO DIED OF FEVER, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, 1890.

Oh ! tenderly close the deep sunken eyes,
Poor eyes that dimmed wearily,
Hopelessly longing for fair distant skies
Where home smiles so cheerily.

On mute, pallid lips now reverently rest
One last kiss, all tearfully
For eyes that shall weep in the far, far west,
And hearts ache—ah ! fearfully.

Fold gently each cold, once eloquent hand,
Forever now motionless ;
Cast o'er him the pall of the Gold-field's sand,
In death lies he portionless.

'Twas only an actor that fell in the fight,
His part playing valiantly,
Where battled the town with the fever-blight,
Like a soldier, died gallantly.

MY MOTHER'S GLOVE.

'Tis but a faded glove,
With fingers frayed and worn,
It tells a mother's love,
Through trial and suffering borne.
The patient tender hand
That throbbed within its fold,
Now in a far-off land
Lies motionless and cold.

How eloquently pleads
Each plaintive little crease,
For life's unselfish deeds
Of toiling without cease ;
Of hours whose only light
Was children's happy eyes,
Cheering the dreary night,
Brightening the sombre skies.

It hath no lingering scent
Of fashion's empty pride ;

No jewels flashing blent
 Beneath its mesh to hide ;
But fragrance rare and old
 As thousand flowers lurk
Within each wrinkled fold
 Of woman's precious work.

Oh ! faded silken glove,
 Thy gentle tenant now
Bears in the life above
 The signet on her brow
Of duty's legacy ;
 Temptation's storms withstood,
The pearl of purity,
 The crown of motherhood !

CHRISTMAS MORN.

There's a holy light like a beacon bright,
Afar over land and sea.
Soft its lambent ray o'er the broad earth plays
With a rosy dancing glee,
And the topmost peak of the mountains bleak
Blush fair in the glowing morn.
Over wood and tarn sweeps the glorious dawn
To herald the Child-Christ born.

White the sea-waves fling like an angel's wing
The foam as their blue crests rise,
While each gallant ship, with a skim and a dip,
In the wind's lap speeding flies ;
And the sailor's song is borne along
The breeze of the golden morn,
For joyous he sings as the mast he swings
To herald the Child-Christ born.

In the land of snow where the keen winds blow
And the ice-king holds his sway,

A glittering sheen on the plains is seen,
As tribute to him they pay.
While merrily sing with a peal and a ring
The bells on the crystal morn,
As gayly they chime with silvery rhyme
To herald the Child-Christ born.

To his sea-girt home, where'er he may roam,
Speed the thoughts of Briton's son.
In city or plain, on the crested main,
The heart of the absent one
Again in his dreams with ecstasy seems
To swell in the happy morn,
As he hears the voice of his loved rejoice,
To herald the Child-Christ born.

In dreams borne along, he joins the glad throng,
The riot and wassail gay ;
And the boar's head bold as in Nowel old
Brave crowns the feast of the day ;
The holly's red blush 'mid the ivy's crush ;
The mistletoe greets the morn
With kisses to claim in love's holy name,
To herald the Child-Christ born.

Then Charity sweet with most gracious feet
Walks forth o'er the smiling land,
To widow's relief, to fatherless grief,
She bringeth a helping hand.
For peace and good-will the whole world doth fill
With the dawn of the Nowel morn.
Let every heart sing a glad welcoming,
To herald the Child-Christ born.

THE CHRISTMAS WREATH.

Oh ! Christmas wreath upon the wall,
 Within thine ivied space
I see the years beyond recall,
 Amid thy leaves I trace
The shadows of a happy past,
 When all the world was bright,
And love its magic splendour cast
 O'er morn and noon and night.

Oh ! Christmas wreath upon the wall,
 'Neath memory's tender spell
A wondrous charm doth o'er thee fall,
 And round thy beauty dwell.
'Thine ivy hath the satiny sheen
 Of tresses I've caressed,
Thy holly's crimson gleam I've seen
 On lips I oft have pressed.

Oh ! Christmas wreath upon the wall,
 A mist steals o'er my sight.

Dear hallow'd wreath, these tears are all
The pledge I now can plight
To those loved ones whose spirit eyes
Shine down the flight of time ;
Around God's throne their voices rise
To swell the Christmas Chime !

THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER
AT VICTORIA HALL.

“ Mammy, I have been to a dinner to-day,
A grand Christmas dinner. Oh, my ! it was gay.
And Billie and me have had plum-pudding too—
See, here in this bag is a nice bit for you.
We’ve had no plum-pudding since poor daddy
died ;
And do you know, mammy, last night, when you
cried
’Cause you said we’d no fire, no light, or no food,
I prayed in the dark to the angels so good
To ask God to send us some dinner to eat.
And when bright morning came, right into the
street,
While you were still sleeping, went Billie and me
To look for the angels, but none did we see.
And tho’ I was tired, and Billie would cry,
And the people pushed us when hurrying by,
I held on to Billie, for we are so small,
The angels, I feared, would not find us at all.

At last I was certain they all had forgot,
And I could not help crying with pain at the
thought,

When I heard some one saying, " Poor little dears,
So cold and so hungry. Come, I'll dry your
tears ! "

* His voice was so kind, and his smile was so sweet,
I knew that the angels had sent him to meet
Little Billie and me ; so we each took a hand,
And he led us to where, in a great hall so grand,
All hung round with holly and shining with light,
Was spread a warm dinner. Oh, my ! what a
sight

To see the poor children, like Billie and me,
All eating and drinking and shouting with glee.
When dinner was over, he with the kind voice
Who found Billie and me, told us all to rejoice.
For a beautiful lady † with heart, oh ! so kind,
Had promised each Christmas a dinner we'd find.
Then we set up a cheer that nothing could still,
And we gave three for *him* with all our good will ;
Then a dear little man ‡ a funny song sang,
And we shouted and laughed till all the hall rang.

* Clement Scott.

† Edith Woodworth.

‡ Toole.

* Another such wonderful tricks did perform,
That I watched all the dolls on the stage in alarm.
I feared they would vanish right into the air
If he gathered them under his magic cap there.
And then we all marched on the stage, one by one,
While the sweet pretty ladies their good work be-
gun,
To load us with dollies and sweeties and toys.
And told us to always be good girls and boys.
And right at the end, near the door, in a chair,
† Sat the dearest old lady, so sweet and so fair !
And she gave each a sixpence, all new and bright.
Then Billie and me held ours quite tight.
See, here they are safe, all for you, mammy dear !
Now, you won't be ill long, since we've brought you
such cheer.
And now you'll have dinner, here's an orange so
sweet,
Some bread and some sugar, a nice bit of meat.
Don't cry, mammy darling, the angels are near ;
They love us, and guard us, and watch o'er us here ;
For we are their children, the poor of the land,
God's sacred, unfortunate, pitiful band."

* Bertram.

† Mrs. Keeley.

SISTER CLAIRE'S CONFESSION.

“ I saw her last night in the moonlight fair,
As I've seen her full many a time,
While I wept and prayed by my pallet bare,
Till the sound of the *Matin* bell's chime.
Again, she stood in the glimmering light
Of the moon 'mid the gloom of my cell,
And its rays stole soft o'er her tresses bright,
Over her shadowy eyes, to dwell
On her pale damp brow with its gaping wound
And the deadly gleaming blood-red flow,
Silent witness to the fell sin that doomed
Her sweet young life with its cruel blow !
Then I sobbed, and shrieked in my anguish deep,
Oh ! my sister, sweet sister, forgive !
I suffer, I pray—with bitter tears reap
Deepest punishment here while I live !

“ The pale mute lips gave no answering word,
No pitying gleam the sad eyes filled,
No pitying throb in the dead heart stirred
Of the sister my jealousy killed !

Ah ! holy father ! can forgiveness rest
On one like me weighted down with years
Of dark deceit, while my stubborn breast
Buried deeply its sin in secret tears ?
Nay ! shrink not away, let me hold the cross,
'Tis the sign of God's merciful love ;
'Twill give me courage to tell of the loss
Of my birthright in Heaven above !”

The waning light of the long summer day
Through the casement fell, and tenderly lay
On the pallid face and fluttering hands
Of the dying nun, while the good priest stands,
Head meekly bowed, strange fear in his heart,
Which throbbing with horror would wildly start
On hearing that awful confession fall
From one deemed the saintliest of them all,
In that Convent-band of women so rare,
Whose lives were deeds of sweet charity fair.
Humbly he kneels and the crucifix clasps
In her feeble hand as with dying gasps
She hoarsely whispers her unhappy tale
In the listening ear of the priest so pale.

“ It was far, far away,
In the long years ago.

Where a deep sunny bay
 Washed with ripple and flow
The white feet of the cliffs,
 On whose moss-covered heights
The fir proudly uplifts,
 And the eagle alights.
It was there, 'mid the firs
 Guarded closely around,
Where the mountain breeze stirs,
 That our home might be found.
The smile of our mother
 Gilded every bright hour,
The love of our brother
 Guarded both like a flower.
Oh ! how joyous the days
 When sure-footed we stept
O'er the mountainous ways,
 Where the cataract leapt.
The scream of the eagle
 Echoed loudly our glee,
As startled the sea-gull
 Fluttered far out at sea.
Our hearts, like its pinion,
 Free as heaven above,
Ne'er dreamed of dominion,
 Never whispered of love !

Till up from the valley,
On a fair summer eve,
The sweet hours to dally,
Came our brave cousin Cleve.
Just returned from the wars,
With his bright epaulets,
Won by many deep scars—
Which no soldier regrets.
How his bold handsome eyes
Flashed and sparkling shone,
As he told how the prize
In fierce battles he'd won.
Ah ! how his stories thrill'd
And made our hearts quick leap,
With strange sweet feelings fill'd.
What spell did o'er us creep?
We knew naught of its pow'r
My sister dear and me.
We drank in hour by hour
Its subtle ecstasy ;
But when his eyes on her
With softened light would rest,
A fierce deep pain would stir
With bitterness my breast.
That strange pain taught me all,
And made my young heart old,

Cast o'er my life the pall
Of jealousy's dark fold.
And she I loved so dear
Grew hateful in my sight,
Until I grew to fear
The power of envy's might.
At last one summer eve
The storm-cloud o'er me burst.
Cleve asked me to receive
A brother's love and trust.
She was to be his bride—
My blue-eyed sister fair,
And in their loving pride
They came, a happy pair,
To ask me to consent,
A sister's blessing give.
God help me !—All the pent-
Up rage that months did live
Deep in my jealous heart
Welled forth in bitter words.
I heeded not their start,
As, like poor frightened birds,
They clung in sad alarm
Together hand in hand,
To hear my fury storm.
Then over all the land,

And out across the sea,

A strange deep mist did spread,
That blinded all to me,

And tinged with lurid red
The sky and cliff and wave.

Fierce murder in my breast
Raged like some fiendish knave

With its mad pain opprest,
My hapless sister tore

I from her lover's fold,
And cast her where the roar
Of swirling waters rolled
Far from the cliff's high brink.

Oh, God !—I see her now—
I hear her shriek—I think

Again I see her brow
With sea-weed matted round,

I hear that awful cry,
I see her lover bound

From off the cliff's crest high,
And sink amid the surge

As o'er him rolled the sea,
To never more emerge

Through all eternity.
And they are dead—dead—dead—

And I through weary years

A life's atonement lead
Through penitence and tears.
Pray, holy father, pray—
My heart is growing still—
Pray God to make the way
Clear to His holy will.
My sight is growing dim,
The cross before me hold,
Close—closer—till on Him
My dying eyes shall fold.
Despair steals o'er my heart.
Will God forgive me all ?
With life 'tis hard to part,
I dread death's heavy pall ;
For in its gathering gloom
I see two forms uprise,
And menace endless doom
For that fell sin that lies
Forever on my soul.
Oh ! God, in pity spare,
Forgive—forgive the whole—
I die—despair—despair ! ”

The pale lips of the priest
Slow moved in silent prayer,

And when that low voice ceased,
 With gentle rev'rent care
Raised from her lowly bed,
 And pillowed on his breast,
The trembling, drooping head,
 The clammy hands caressed.
Then solemnly and low
 His voice stole on her ear,
Pierced the despairing woe
 That o'er her cast its fear :
" I am thy cousin Cleve !
 My poor lost sister Claire,
Since that sad summer eve
 I've sought thee everywhere.
And now, thank God, at last,
 E'en with death's portal nigh,
I bring thee from the past
 Sweet peace, ere thou shalt die.
For see ! here in thy hand
 I lay this slender ring.
Within its shining band
 Forgiveness it doth bring ;
And list thee while I tell
 How 'mid the roaring sea
Deliverance o'er us fell
 And God's will set us free.

When on that fatal night
 I plunged the cruel wave,
I swam far out of sight
 Thy sister's life to save ;
And with one arm afloat,
 I bore her by my side,
Till suddenly a boat
 Slow drifting I descried.
With keel upturned, it danced
 With playful motion near,
Until, oh God ! it chanced
 Within my grasp to steer.
Safe, through the long dark hours
 We floated on its keel,
Till life's returning powers
 Did o'er thy sister steal.
At morn upon the rim
 Of that sea, heaving dark,
I saw with vision dim
 Approach a noble bark,
And nearer swept its sails,
 As swift its course it sped ;
With answering cries it hails
 Our lonely ocean bed.
And then again began
 In new scenes a new life ;

The years their cycles span.
Thy sister, my sweet wife,
Yearned for her native land,
The sight of thy dear face—
But here within thy hand
Her dying pledge I place.
Turn thine unhappy eyes
To where in heaven above
God's sweet forgiveness lies,
And thy lost sister's love."

A tender, holy light
Stole o'er the nun's wan face ;
Her dying, fading sight
Lit with a wondrous grace ;
With one long happy kiss
Upon the golden band,
She passed in peaceful bliss
To God's own glorious land.

"SHE."

Dedicated to Miss Sophia Eyre on her impersonation of
Mr. Rider Haggard's heroine.

Oh ! woman of the fair proud face,
The stately mien, the classic grace,
The life stream of a royal race
Doth through thy heart exulting pace.

The tragic splendour of thine eyes
Flash lurid as a flame doth rise,
And darkly whirling, upward flies,
An offering to the vengeful skies.

Thy voice the mellow ring of gold
In every tone of love doth hold.
Lo ! in thy wrath how grandly bold
Its cadence proud, sonorous rolled.

Thine unforgotten love doth seem
A story of a centuried ream
That, like a star's bright fitful gleam,
Arose and set within a dream.

Lo ! 'neath the wondrous subtle power
Of mimic art, oh queen ! thy dower
Of beauty blooms a nightly flower,
Within Melpomene's radiant bower.

A Celt, with glinting ruddy hair,
Thy woe and passion doth declare,
In velvet tones, her presence fair
Hath caught thy charm and magic snare.

TO CLEMENT SCOTT,

ON HIS BOOK OF LAYS AND LYRICS.

Thy verse is a lute and its strings are of gold.
Thy soul is the music its chords doth unfold.
'Neath sympathy's fingers how tender the strain
That banishes sorrow and soothes away pain.
But oh ! when love's whisper doth thrillingly sweep
The innermost chord of thy soul, hidden deep,
How rapturously swells the strain borne along
Of melody born in the heart of thy song.

TO GALATEA.

“ Pygmalion ! ” I hear again
Thy voice as through it thrilled the pain,
Its sad sweet cadence’ rise and fall
In trembling tones, as with them all
Thy soul went out in thy “ Farewell,
Pygmalion ! ”

Oh ! it shall dwell
Forever with me in my dreams,
Thy voice’s music, till it seems
I see again thy sweet pure face,
And gaze on all thy wondrous grace.
Oh ! Galatea, in thy voice
Music and love shall e’er rejoice ;
Upon thy lips the sacred kiss
Hath genius laid, and thine the bliss
To feel and know she doth inspire
Thy soul—thy being with the fire
Her touch hath kindled in thy heart,
To consecrate thee to her art.

THE BELLE OF THE BALLET.

Watch her as she lightly trips,
Lithe of limb, with supple hips,
Flashing eye, and smiling lips.

Gracefully swaying
To the band playing,
Dances the Belle of the Ballet.

As the music's rhythm flows,
Round she speeds on nimble toes.
All the swells who sit in rows
Adoringly gaze,
And noisily praise
Each *pas* of the Belle of the Ballet.

See ! what dainty grace she throws
Into every skilful pose.
'Til she seems a wondrous rose.
Rapturously whirling,
Maddeningly twirling,
Dances the Belle of the Ballet.

Louder swells the music crash,
O'er her charms the limelights flash,
And the heart of every mash,
 Longingly thrilling,
 Beats until willing
To break for the Belle of the Ballet.

ST. VALENTINE'S REVENGE.

St. Valentine roamed 'neath a wintry sky,
While he sadly pondered the reason why
He was left out alone to shiver and die,
With his poor little messenger Cupid by.

For Love's tiny bow
Had lost all its go ;
Benumbed with the cold,
No arrow would hold.

Then St. Valentine spoke, in tones sad and low,
“ My poor little comrade, your quiver and bow
Forever are useless, for full well I know
We have an inveterate, powerful foe,

An enemy bold,
Whose merciless hold
Doth thousands enfold,
The demon of Gold !

“ He has stolen away our prestige and right,
Has made silly women believe in his might :

With his new-fangled gifts has dazzled their sight,
To the old-fashioned valentine blinded them quite.

A jewel, a ring,
Or some costly thing,
With sham glittering
Of love did he bring."

"Alas!" sobbed poor Cupid, "what shall we do?

Teach them a lesson they ever shall rue ;"

"For never again shall lovers be true!"

Swore St. Valentine as with Cupid he flew.

"Ha ! ha ! now we're free,
My comrade, we'll see
Where the sorrow will be,
To the women or me."

THE GIFT OF SONG.

God's angel once with spirit wand
Asunder smote the mystic bond
Sealing the mute lips of the soul ;
And lo ! with full melodious roll,
With wondrous cadence borne along,
Sprang forth the glorious gift of song.

Then all the soul's deep suffering
And voiceless pain did pathos bring,
And hope lent rich exultant tone ;
E'en grim despair's sad wail and moan
With tender rhythm thrilled the throng
Hanging upon each breath of song.

But oh ! the highest gift of all
This sweet soul-language is to thrall
Our being into peace and rest,
To lull the pain in every breast,
To lift us to that realm along
Whose golden shore rings endless song.

TO MY MOTHER.

Oh ! mother, where'er in the realms of the blest
 'Mid the dead mothers' band thou art happy to-
 night,
Come visit my pillow and lovingly rest
 My soul 'neath thy wings' tender heavenly light.

For oh ! mother, couldst thou know how I weary
 Of life's hollow pleasures and meaningless strain,
Thine own gentle hand would break the spell dreary,
 Thou'd take me to rest on thy bosom again.

As when a weak babe on the threshold of life
 Thou nestled me close to thy fond mother-heart,
Take back to thine arms, from this world and its
 strife,
Thy child to new birth and in heaven a part.

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